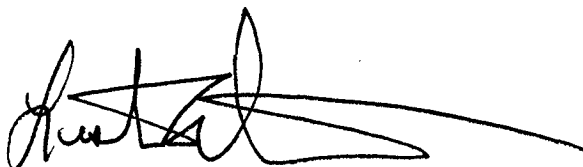


Memorandum

Date: May 17, 1999

To: Mary Nichols
Patty Beneke
Patrick Wright
Alf Brandt

From: Lester A. Snow



Subject: Review of the CALFED Program Decision

Attached for your review, comment, and approval is the **CALFED Program Decision** description. This document is a critical part of the Draft Programmatic EIS/EIR.

The CALFED Program Decision includes a description of the proposed alternative for the long-term comprehensive plan to restore ecological health and improve water management for beneficial uses of the Bay-Delta system which is analyzed, together with the other alternatives to the plan, in the Draft Programmatic EIS/EIR. This project description (or "preferred program alternative") is necessary to give the public and the decision makers an accurate and complete description of what actions are being proposed and analyzed in the environmental document, and to make the document useful "as a vehicle for intelligent public participation." *County of Inyo v. City of Los Angeles* (1977) 71 Cal App. 3d 185, 197. (CEQA Guidelines, Section 15124; NEPA Regulations, 40 CFR Section 1502.14(e) .) Because the preferred program alternative presents broad policy preferences and program direction coupled with a process to collect additional information and make future decisions based upon that information, this document also describes proposed near-term actions and an implementation strategy to better understand how the preferred program alternative could be implemented.

The CALFED Program Decision document is closely tied to the *Revised Draft Phase II Report* which is being circulated concurrently for Policy Group review. A third document, the Environmentally Preferable Alternative description, will be circulated for review, comment, and approval soon.

The CALFED Program Decision document has been reviewed extensively by agency staff and Policy Group members, and should require very little, if any, modification. We have not yet made any modifications in response to the incomplete Policy Group discussion on May 13, 1999. We can discuss changes, and approve the document, on May 24 when we meet to discuss the *Revised Draft Phase II Report*.

Attachment

CALFED Agencies

California The Resources Agency
Department of Fish and Game
Department of Water Resources
California Environmental Protection Agency
State Water Resources Control Board

Federal Environmental Protection Agency
Department of the Interior
Fish and Wildlife Service
Bureau of Reclamation
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Department of Agriculture
Natural Resources Conservation Service
Department of Commerce
National Marine Fisheries Service